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UNCLAS LIMA 002342

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: OPPOSITION APRA PARTY DECIDES TO DROP PROPOSED SANCTIONS AGAINST TOLEDO IN FALSE SIGNATURES CASE UNTIL HE LEAVES OFFICE

REF: LIMA 2282

Sensitive but Unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

¶1. (U) APRA Congresswoman (and Chairwoman of the party's Political Committee) Mercedes Cabanillas announced 5/25 that the APRA legislative bloc had decided to drop its planned resolution calling for a "political trial" of President Alejandro Toledo on allegations that he was involved in forging signatures to register his Pais Posible (now Peru Posible) party for the 2000 elections (Reftel). Cabanillas acknowledged that although APRA had originally recruited 40 legislators to sign the resolution at the conclusion of the Congress Plenary's 5/18-19 session, many subsequently withdrew their support, leaving APRA with an insufficient number to proceed with any chance of success. It would be better, she surmised, to wait until the next government takes office to proceed against Toledo on political charges.

¶2. (SBU) APRA Congressman and legislative bloc leader Cesar Zumaeta, in a conversation with Polcouns earlier that day, had indicated that APRA would be dropping its attempt to sanction Toledo politically. Zumaeta, who according to a Presidency source was one of those pushing hardest to go after the President, appeared resigned to this development. "We'll leave Toledo in peace to finish his term," Zumaeta declared, implying that once the President leaves office the gloves will be off.

¶3. (SBU) COMMENT: APRA's decision to drop its "political trial" proposal should postpone further congressional consideration of the false signatures case until Toledo's term ends, provided, of course, that additional evidence and accusations do not/not surface before then implicating the President. Such evidence/accusations could conceivably be raised in the ongoing criminal investigation/prosecution of Toledo's sister Margarita and other GOP and Peru Posible officials accused of complicity in the forgeries and/or in connection with an attempt to obstruct justice by facilitating the temporary flight of a key witness. END
COMMENT.
STRUBLE